

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-05 AF-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
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C O N F I D E N T I A L HAVANA 0457

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: CASC CGEN ASEC PINS CU
SUBJ: MODEST CUBAN GESTURES TOWARD U.S.

1. GOC APPEARS TO BE TRYING TO OFFSET MAJOR IRRITANT OF
CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN ETHIOPIA WITH GESTURES TO U.S. ON OTHER
ISSUES. FOR EXAMPLE, DURING CALL BY USINT CHIEF ON
FEBRUARY 14, ACTING MINREX DIRECTOR FOR NORTH AMERICAN
AFFAIRS CARLOS ZAMORA DEALT (INTER ALIA) WITH FOLLOWING
MATTERS:

A. INFORMES US THAT MAERICAN HIJACKERS IN CUBA WHO ARE
NOT IN JAIL AND WHO WISH TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY WILL BE ALLOWED
TO DEPART FOR THIRD COUNTRIES IF THEY HAVE NORMAL U.S. TRAVEL
DOCUMENTATION. (ZAMORA MADE CLEAR THAT CUBA WISHED TO AVOID ANY
PUBLIC PERCEPTION THAT IT WAS CONNIVING WITH US TO DELIVER
HIJACKERS TO U.S., WHERE A NUMBER ARE WANTED ON CRIMINAL
CHARGES.) (SEE HAVANA 0432).

B. INFORMED US THAT GOC IS MAKING EVERY EFFORT IN RESPONSE
TO OUR REQUEST TO PROCESS AS MANY REPATRIATING
SINGLE-SOURCE AMCITS AND FAMILIES (CHURCH GROUP)
AS POSSIBLE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF CHARTER AIRCRAFT
TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 28 (HAVANA 0429).

C. GAVE OFFICIAL (IF STILL VERBAL) CONFIRMATION
OF THE SUICIDE IN PRISON LAST AUGUST OF A DUAL NATIONAL
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AMERICAN POLITICAL PRISONER. USINT (AND DEPARTMENT)
HAVE BEEN SEEKING SUCH CONFIRMATION SINCE LAST OCTOBER
(77 HAVANA 333).

2. THERE IS ALSO GROWING EVIDENCE THAT GOC IS PREPARING
TO APPROVE DEPARTURE OF AT LEAST SOME DUAL NATIONAL
FAMILIES, PRESUMABLY IN RESPONSE TO THE CODEL RICHMOND/

NOLAN APPEAL TO PRESIDENT CASTRO.

3. WE HAVE, IN ADDITION, SEEN SOME GOC IMPROVEMENT RECENTLY IN TWO OTHER AREAS WHICH HAVE BEEN TROUBLING TO USINT OPERATIONS: SCHEDULING LONG-PENDING APPOINTMENTS WITH GOC OFFICIALS, AND SUPPLYING PROMISING CUBAN CANDIDATES FOR EMPLOYMENT IN THE SECTION UNDER OUR UMBRELLA CONTRACT WITH THE CUBAN DIPLOMATIC SERVICES ORGANIZATION (CUBALSE).

4. ON OTHER HAND, WE CONTINUE TO FACE PROBLEMS IN OTHER OPERATIONAL AREAS--NOT TO SPEAK OF MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY CONCERNS--INCLUDING SERIOUS DELAYS IN OBTAINING PERMISSION TO VISIT AMERICAN PRISONERS, NEARLY HALF OF WHOM WE STILL HAVE NOT BEEN ALLOWED TO VISIT.

5. COMMENT: IT APPEARS LIKELY THAT GOC IS MAKING CONSCIOUS IF MODEST EFFORT TO BE RESPONSIVE TO US ON SOME MATTERS OF CONCERN DESPITE THE IMPASSE OVER AFRICA IN HOPES OF KEEPING THE PROCESS TOWARD NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS ALIVE. PRESUMABLY, THE CUBAN HOPE IS THAT, AT BEST, WE WILL EVENTUALLY DISREGARD THEIR AFRICAN INVOLVEMENT AND MOVE FORWARD TO DROP THE EMBARGO IN EXCHANGE FOR CUBAN GESTURES IN OTHER AREAS OR, AT MINIMUM, THAT WE WILL SOFTEN OUR PUBLIC CRITICISM OF HAVANA'S AFRICAN POLICY. ON OTHER HAND, THAT THEY HAVE NOT YET MADE
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EVEN THE MOST MODEST, DIRECT EFFORTS TO LIMIT OUR CONCERNS RE ETHIOPIA (FOR EXAMPLE, ON THE MODEL OF MOSCOW'S NON-BORDER CROSSING ASSURANCES) SEEMS TO CONFIRM THAT CUBANS ARE PREPARED TO GIVE PRECEDENCE TO THEIR AFRICAN INVOLVEMENT OVER ANY DESIRE TO CONCILIATE U.S.
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